2: Mountford
773, 778, 776, 821

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[Materials pertaining to these categories will also be found in category 532.]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER II

The Creation Period

WHATEVER differences may exist between the Melville Island cultures and those of the mainland, and, in some aspects, those differences are considerable, the creation stories indicate that the two cultures sprang from the same source.[1]

At the close of the creation period, both on Melville Island and the mainland, the original creators, men and women, were transformed, or transformed themselves, into various creatures, plants, natural forces or heavenly bodies.

Although I would not claim that the list of totems is complete, I feel certain that the aboriginal artists pictured, on the bark paintings, most of the areas created by their mythical forbears. More detailed research may reveal additional totemic places.

The list of the thirty-four totemic ancestors illustrated on the bark paintings is curiously unbalanced in its distribution. More than a third of these are trees, almost all eucalypts. The remaining four groups are: the natural forces, creatures of the air, the sea, and one inanimate totem, i.e. red ochre. Neither land animals nor reptiles are referred to in the bark paintings of the totemic places, although they appear in the myths.

These facts contrast strongly with the Central Australian beliefs regarding their totemic creatures (Mountford, 1948, p. 23; Spencer and Gillen, 1899, p. 387), where almost every living thing, particularly the creatures, took some part in the creation of the topography; plant totems are uncommon in Central Australia.

The same Central Australian characteristics are also evident in the myths of Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 21), although in the adjacent Arnhem Land, the great creators, i.e., the *Wawalik* Sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 250), and the *Djanggau* Sisters (Berndt, 1952; Mountford, 1956, p. 267; Warner, 1937, p. 336), made the bulk of the topography, plants and creatures.

Although the Groote Eylandt pantheon, like that of Melville Island, originated as men and women, they were, almost without exception, changed to non-human totems, whereas the great creators of Arnhem Land, the *Wawalik* and the *Djanggau* Sisters, have always remained human.

[1] Little research has been carried out on the creation stories of the Australian aborigines; Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 387) giving the most detailed account.

Z: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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1. THE CREATION OF THE LAND OF THE TIWI

773 In the beginning there was no light, the earth was flat and featureless; no hills or valleys broke its monotonous surface, no trees covered its nakedness, no call of birds disturbed its quietness. It was a dead, silent world.

Then, at some period in those dim and far-off times, known to the Melville Islanders as the *palawari*, an old blind woman, *Mudungkala*, rose miraculously out of the ground at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island, carrying in her arms three infants, two girls, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, and a boy, *Purukupali*.[10] No one knows from where she came, nor after she had finished the creation of the land of the Tiwis, where she went.

Clasping her children to her breast and crawling on her knees, *Mudungkala* travelled slowly northward, the fresh water, that bubbled up in the track she made, becoming the swift tideway of Dundas Strait now separating Melville Island from the Coburg Peninsula on the mainland (Fig. 1).

Mudungkala then turned westward, and, as she formed the northern shores of Melville Island as far as Cape Van Diemen, she made occasional journeys inland, creating the Johnson and Lethbridge Bays, Curtis Haven, the Tjipripu River, Shark Bay, and the northern entrance of Apsley Straits.

Mudungkala, still carrying her children, crawled along the west coast of Bathurst Island until she reached Cape Fourcroy, creating Port Hurd on the way. On Turiturina Island in Port Hurd, the mythical bird-men and women, and later, the *Ningaui* spirit people, performed the first *kulama* ceremonies.

At Cape Fourcroy, the old woman turned toward her starting place, Murupianga. One side of the wide channel she created became the southern shores of Bathurst Island, where, at Maundu, the dreaded *Mawajis* made their home.

But when *Mudungkala* reached the present Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island), she thought she was making the island too large. So, remembering the deep inlet near Cape Van Diemen, she crawled northward, her track becoming the winding Apsley Straits that now separate Melville from Bathurst Island.[11] She then turned back, felt her way to Jurubulinai[12] at the southern end of

[10] Not all the informants mentioned *Purukupali*, although, in the creation period, it was *Purukupali* who brought the spirit children, the *Pinjamis*, to their mothers.

[11] At this point in the creation story, some informants interpolated a myth that describes how *Mudungkala*, under a different name, was speared by *Purui* (sea eagle) and *Jirakuti* (sea-eagle). This myth, described on page 26, is obviously an accretion.

[12] In the last phase of creation, this island was the totem place of a woman of a similar name, *Mudungkala*, one of the wives of *Tukimbini*. At present we do not know the correct relationship between these two women; further research no doubt will clarify the situation.

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Apeley Strait, continuing her journey eastward until she reached her starting point at Murupianga. On that last journey, *Mudungkala* created the Clarence Strait, thus completely separating the land of the Tiwis from the rest of Australia.

Before *Mudungkala* crawled southward, out of all knowledge of the Tiwi, she decreed that the bare land should be clothed with vegetation and inhabited with creatures, so that her children, whom she left behind at Murupianga, should have food.

2. THE FIRST INHABITANTS

The two daughters of *Mudungkala*, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, with their brother, *Purukupali*, established themselves in the new land.

The accounts of this period are vague and indefinite, the most consistent being that *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipinis*, brought some back, and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, so that they could become mothers.[18] Thus the family at Murupianga multiplied, and, although many of the genealogies are confused and unreliable, those of the main personalities appear to be consistent.

Murupiangkala, whose husband the aborigines did not remember, had one daughter, *Tukumbana*, who, in turn, married *Wilindu*.

Tukumbana had two daughters, *Wilindula* and *Numanirakala*, and a son, *Tukimbini*. *Tukimbini's* wife, *Waia*, gave birth to one daughter, *Bima*, who became the wife of *Purukupali*. It was the death of their son, *Djinini*, that brought the creation period to a close.

Wuriupranala, whose husband was *Andjalui*, had one son, *Wuriuprinili*. The aborigines did not know who were the parents of *Tjapara*, who later quarrelled with *Purukupali*.

In those early days there was neither light nor heat, so the descendants of old *Mudungkala* had to grope around in the darkness to find their food, and having found it were forced to eat it raw.

Once two men, *Jurumu* (later the wedge-tailed eagle), and *Mudati* (the fork-tailed kite), whose parents the aborigines did not know, were rubbing two sticks together, when they noticed a speck of light where the heat, caused by the friction between the two sticks, had ignited the powdered wood-dust.

[18] The aborigines, who almost certainly do not understand physical paternity, believe that the *Pitipinis* have always existed although they could not explain their origin. In the later period of creation, it was one of the duties of *Purukupali* to bring the spirit children to his wife, *Bima*, who gave them to the women. Before he died, however, *Purukupali* told the *Pitipinis* to seek their mothers through the medium of their fathers.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 [372] Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[14]

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*, [821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga* [823] rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird, [825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[15]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-water lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

Jirakupai was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male [411] spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

[14] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*ikwani*) from glowing coals.

[15] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

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Jirakupai had just made a number of these weapons, when a party of men from eastern Melville Island rushed into his camp and speared him in the back many times. But, as they struck, *Jirakupai* plucked the spears out and cast them at his opponents. Then howling loudly with pain and picking up the spears he had just made, *Jirakupai* dived into the water to escape further injury.

His wives, to avoid capture, changed themselves into birds, *Kuraruna* becoming the night-heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) and *Jaknia*, the brown heron that frequents the mangrove swamps (possibly *Butorides striata*).

The next morning his enemies saw *Jirakupai* floating in the water, no longer as a man, but as a crocodile. The spear wounds in his back had healed and grown into a spinal crest, his mouth, through shouting so much in his pain, had grown longer and larger, while his bundle of spears had been transformed into his t[illegible], on the extreme end of which was a male, *tunkaringa*, spear, with barbs only at one side.

The totem place of the crocodile (*Crocodilus porosus*) is pictured on the bark painting, Pl. 16a.

In this painting the central disc is the totemic lagoon, *Jirininga*, near which six crocodiles are resting on the mud. The light-coloured vertical panels are the nests of the crocodiles and the short transverse bars, their eggs.

On the mainland, south of Wulrungku (Karslake Island), three men, *Mudati*, his younger brother, *Pilibiliningi*, and *Jurunu* lived in the same camp as an unmarried woman, *Parabruma*.

Mudati and *Parabruma* were fond of each other, a fact which infuriated *Jurunu*, who wanted *Parabruma* for a wife.

One day, when *Jurunu* was out hunting, he saw a bandicoot[18] *tipapu*, run from his grass nest into a hollow tree for shelter. This suggested an idea to *Jurunu* as to how he could injure, or, perhaps, incapacitate his rival. Making a number of short, sharp sticks, he buried them, point upward, in the ground, rearranging the grass nest over them so that it would not show signs of having been disturbed. Then going to *Mudati* he suggested that they should hunt together.

Of course, *Jurunu* led his rival to the faked bandicoot nest where, gesticulating excitedly, he told his companion to jump on the nest before the bandicoot escaped. But *Mudati* demurred, saying that if he waited until the bandicoot showed itself, he could kill it with his throwing stick.

But *Jurunu* was so insistent that his was the better way that *Mudati*, not suspecting treachery, obeyed his instructions and jumped on the faked nest. [825]

[18] These bandicoots build flimsy grass shelters under which they hide.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 825 As the sharpened sticks pierced his feet, *Mudui* fell to the ground calling *girik-girik* (his call today), then changing himself into the fork-tailed kite (*Milvus migrans*), rose into the air and flew away.[17]

Quickly *Jurumu* sought out the woman, *Parabruma*, and proposed marriage, but she, knowing of his treachery, angrily refused him. Incensed and disappointed, *Jurumu* struck *Parabruma* on either side of the head with his throwing stick, cutting her head so badly that long pieces of bleeding skin hung down on each side.

Screaming with pain (her present-day call), *Parabruma* changed herself into the masked plover (*Lobibyx miles*). One can still see those red flaps of skin hanging on either side of her face. Intent on revenge, *Mudui's* brother, *Pilibilinga*, crept up behind *Jurumu* and speared him in the back. Shouting "*guti-guti*" (his call), *Jurumu* changed himself into the wedge-tailed eagle (*Oroaetus audax*). When *Pilibilinga* saw this he became a small brown hawk (unidentified).

773 *Jurumu* appears in another early creation myth when he, his wife *Narina*, and her brother, *Kilpuruni*, lived in the same camp. One day, when the woman was out in the forest collecting food for her husband, *Kilpuruni* came up and asked for some. *Narina* offered him an opossum, but he said he was not fond of that meat. After refusing wild honey and several other foods, *Kilpuruni* admitted that he really wanted *Narina* to go in the bush with him. *Narina* refused, saying they could not do so, because they were brother and sister. However, *Kilpuruni*, by persistence and cajolery, finally had his way.

On returning to camp, *Narina* confessed her misdeeds to *Jurumu*, who, although he was angry and punished his wife, did not mention the matter to his brother-in-law. Biding his time, he invited *Kilpuruni* to go with him to look for hives of wild bees.

They had both climbed a high eucalyptus tree, when *Jurumu* showed his brother-in-law a hive at the end of a long projecting branch. Waiting until *Kilpuruni* had climbed out to investigate the hive, *Jurumu* cut the limb, which crashed to the ground on the top of the unfortunate victim.

[825] *Kilpuruni*, all flattened out, changed himself into the present-day blanket lizard (*Chamydosaurus kingii*); *Narina*, who, in spite of his misdeeds, was fond of *Kilpuruni*, became the black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksi*) and still mourns for her unfortunate brother, while *Jurumu*, now the wedge-tailed eagle, is always on the look-out to kill and eat his wife's seducer.

[171] [17] A myth, with many points of resemblance, except that the main actors were crows and a wedge-tailed eagle, was collected by the author from the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia. (Mountford, 1937, field notes.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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3. THE DEATH OF PURUKUPALI

While many of the people of the early creation period were spreading over the island, the original family, *Wuriupranala*, *Murupiangkala* and *Purukupali*, and their descendants, had established themselves on south-eastern Melville Island; *Murupiangkala*, with her daughter *Tukumbuna* and her grandchildren, *Tukimbini*, *Wilinduala* and *Numanirakala*, at Murupianga; *Wuriupranala* with her son *Wuriuprinili*, at Wuriupi; and *Purukupali*, his wife *Bima* and their infant son, *Djinini*, at Impanali (Fig. 1).

Purukupali was strongly attached to *Djinini*. Every morning, when *Bima* went out food-gathering, she would take *Djinini* with her, bringing him back to *Purukupali* at the end of the day, together with the food she had collected.

In the same camp lived an unmarried man, *Tjapara*, who used to persuade *Bima* to leave her child asleep under the shade of a tree and sneak into the forest with him. This intrigue had been going on for some time when, on one very hot day, *Bima* stayed away from her child too long, for, when she returned, the shade had moved and *Djinini* was lying dead in the hot sun. Distraught with grief, *Bima* chanted her song of remorse—

Bili wangia tingatia
(Evil woman am I to have caused the death of my son.)

When *Purukupali* heard of the death of *Djinini*, his anger knew no bounds.[18] Striking his wife on her head with a throwing stick, and hunting her into the forest, he decreed that death should come to the whole world. As his son had died, said *Purukupali*, so the whole of creation would die, and once dead, never again would come to life. There was no death before that time.

Tjapara remonstrated with *Purukupali*, and pleaded for the dead body of *Djinini*, promising to restore him to life in three days.[19] But *Purukupali* was so adamant that the two men quarrelled about this matter until *Purukupali*, losing his temper, threw a *muruguna* (Pl. 32D) at *Tjapara* who replied with the forked throwing stick, *miluanta* (Pl. 32C) known today as *Tjapara's muruguna*. Soon the two men were locked in a deadly struggle, each wounding the other severely in the face and body.

[18] My informant stated that it was not the intrigues of *Tjapara* and *Bima* that enraged *Purukupali*, but that, by their selfishness, they had caused the death of his son.

[19] This is a reversal of ideas. In the mainland myths it is the moon that brings death to mankind (Mountford, 1956, p. 503), but among the Tiwi, it is the moon who endeavours to prevent death coming to the world. This is one of the many factors that suggest that the Tiwi must have been separated from the effects of the mainland cultures for a considerable period.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 Still railing, *Purukupali* picked up the dead body of his son, which *Bima* had wrapped in a sheet of paper-bark, and walking backward into the sea, called out loudly as the waters closed over his head,

Mauliantanili awangini tangini nu mu.

(You must all follow me; as I die, so must you all die.)

[823] The place where *Purukupali* died, adjacent to Impanali, on the east coast of Melville Island, became a whirlpool so strong that any aboriginal who approached it in a canoe would be drowned. When *Tjapara* saw what had 773 happened, he changed himself into the moon. But he did not entirely escape 824 the decree of *Purukupali*, for, even though *Tjapara* is eternally reincarnated, he has to die for three days. On any clear night, one can see on the face of the moon-man the wounds which he received in his fight with *Purukupali* so long ago.

X 532 One bark painting, Pl. 22, c, deals with the death of *Purukupali* and his 773 son *Djinini*. At *a*, is the whirlpool off Impanali Point, eastern Melville Island, where *Purukupali*, *b*, carrying his dead son, disappeared beneath the surface of the water.

The foot-marks of *Purukupali*, as he walked backward into the water, are the white dots at *c*; his arms, the two white bars, at *d*; and the dead child he carried is at *e*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, at *f*, is asking for the body of the dead child to restore him to life.

The moon in the sky is shown at *g*; the forked throwing stick, *mikuntu* at *h*; and at *j* are the plain throwing sticks, *muruguna*, which when thrown by *Purukupali*, caused the wounds on the face of *Tjapara*.

At *l*, *l*, are the goose-feather balls, *tokwianga* (Pl. 31B), of *Purukupali*; *n*, *n*, his cane armlets, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H); *s* (upper left) is his cockatoo-feather head ornament, *primitiki*; *k*, *k*, are his bark baskets, *wanatuna*; *u*, his firesticks; *o*, is his camp fire; and *r*, his water-hole.

Tjapara's fireplace, an unlocalized spot, *Oulini*, in the sky, is at *q*; his camp-fire is at *p*, and his firestick at *t*.

4. THE PUKAMUNI OF PURUKUPALI

773 When *Tukimbini*, who was living at Murupianga, heard of the death of *Purukupali*, he sent a message stick to *Talinini* of the honey-people of central Bathurst Island, appointing him the ceremonial leader (*alawia*) of the burial rituals.

At the same time, because they were near at hand, he told the people who lived at Murupianga, Wuriupi and Waiku, that as they were the appointed

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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"workers" (*wunarus*), it would be their duty to cut the burial poles, *tudinis*, make and paint the large ceremonial baskets, *wunaruna*, and the elaborate *pukamuni* spears, *tunkaringa*, as well as to clear the burial ground at Taparatimi, which was east of Impanali, the place where *Purukupali* died. As *Purukupali* had entered the sea and was drowned, there was no grave to cover and keep clean, as there would be at a usual *pukamuni*.

The "working party", who cut the poles with stone axes, consisted of the men, *Andjakui* (fresh water), *Wuriuprinili* (fire), *Tukimbini* (honey-eater), *Jidani* (saw-fish), *Timalana* (mosquito), *Taduwala* (shark) and *Pulajerapi* (mullet). Two turtle women, *Garagalani* and *Ringa* made some of the large *pukamuni* baskets, and a honey woman, *Latungkala*, who was not one of the "workers", another basket, which was decorated by the honey-men, *Putuki* and *Kulupini*.

While the "working party" were busy at their tasks, *Talinini*, the honey-man of Bathurst Island, sent specially carved message sticks, *purunkita* (Fig. 5F, G, H) to the various groups of men and women on Bathurst and Melville Islands, instructing them to assemble at certain places, then move eastward to Tapararimi, performing the *ilania* ceremonies[20] on the way.

A bark painting, Pl. 3A, B, deals with the assembling of the people for *Purukupali's pukamuni*.

The black disc, *d*, at the bottom of the painting, is Bia-wururu, central Bathurst Island, where the leader, the honey-man, *Talinini*, with *Mauwini* and *Taparalili* performed the first *ilania* ceremony. Pintamu, *g*, is the home of *Talinini* and Putawini, *h*, that of *Mauwini*.

The second *ilania* was performed at Rarukumpili, *e* (western Bathurst Island). A fish-man, *Pulangaraui*, a participant of this ceremony, lived on an adjacent point of land, *f*. The "workers" from the east coast also performed *ilanias* at Ininu, *j*, central Melville Island,[21] as well as at three localities on the east coast, i.e., Wuriupi, *l*, Murupiangu, *m*, and Tapararimi, *n*.

The central disc, *k*, is Tapararimi, where the creation people, from all parts of the Islands, assembled to perform the final *pukamuni* rituals of *Purukupali*.

The many lines, *a*, *a*, at the top and bottom of the painting, symbolize the routes of the ancestral men as they walked to Tapararimi, and *b*, *b*, paths taken by the women, who always travel to a *pukamuni* ceremony by a different route from that of the men.

[20] The *ilanias* are performed every evening for some weeks before the final *pukamuni* rituals (p. 68).

[21] Another account places this *ilania* at Puntubu.

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Circles *b*, *e*, are places where the women stood at *Purukupali's* ceremony, and lines *c*, *c*, the paths they made as they danced toward the central dancing ground, the *milimika*.

According to other informants, the honey-men from Bathurst Island and other groups from western Melville Island assembled and performed an *ilania* at Tuju, while the people from south and south-western Melville Island performed yet another *ilania* at Puntubu (Fig. 1).

At the conclusion of these *ilanias* the mythical people from the west met at Rulijunga, where *Mantinuria*, one of the eucalyptus-tree women (Pl. 18A) had prepared a ceremonial ground for them. Here the assembled people performed another *ilania*, after which they moved off as a body to Timbaranapi, where the "workers", having cut the poles and prepared the *pukamuni* spears, baskets and other paraphernalia, had already assembled for the final *ilania*.

After a ceremonial fight[32] and the performance of the *ilania* ceremony, the men and women travelled to Tapararimi by different paths to carry out the final rituals.

A simple bark painting, Pl. 2A, pictures the *pukamuni* ground of *Purukupali* at Tapararimi.

The lower black space is the ceremonial ground (*milimika*) on which the participants performed their dances, and the white area on the top, the several honey-men, one of whom, *Talinini*, was in charge of the rituals.

The five upright vertical panels are the *tudinis* (*pukamuni* poles); the lower line of black horizontal rectangles represents the red ochre, and the upper line of rectangles, black paint, with which the performers decorated themselves.

The dots represent paint on the bodies of the caterpillar men, the *Mathdaianini*, who, at the close of the ceremony, transformed themselves into the Milky Way.

The *pukamuni* rituals and those who mourned beside the poles at Tapararimi are illustrated on a bark painting, Pl. 2D, E.

The central black oval, *c*, is the swift whirlpool off Impanili, where *Purukupali*, walking along the track, *f*, *f*, with his dead son in his arms, drowned himself.

[32] In the ceremonies of the present day, the "workers" when they return from cutting the poles, which are adjacent to the grave, are looked upon as *mapaditis* (spirits of the dead). Before the *ilania* can proceed, the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" take part in a ceremonial fight (Pl. 25D), in which the "workers" (as *mapaditis*) are vanquished. During creation times, a similar fight took place at Timbaranapi, when the *pukamuni* people from the west coast met the "workers" from the east.

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The *pukamuni* poles, *a*, *a*, etc., and *b*, *b*, etc., are now parallel reefs of stone[32] on the sea-coast at Impanali; circle *d*, is a ring of white sand encircling the death place of *Purukupali*; and *e*, a large boulder at Tapararimi, once a stone axe, which the "workers" had used to cut the *pukamuni* poles.

The remainder of the designs on the painting symbolize the people of creation times mourning for *Purukupali*. The dots *j*, *j*, on the ground of the painting, represent the coloured ochres on the body of the ceremonial leader, *Talinini*; the black rectangle, *g*, *Waia*, the mother-in-law of *Purukupali*; and *h*, *h*, two bird-women, *Pungatili* and *Matungdili*.

At *k* (left) is a honey-woman, *Imbara*, the sister of *Talinini*; *l* (upper left), her mother, *Lauungkula*, who made a bark basket, and *m*, another honey-woman, *Iruma*. *Mauwini* is at *n*, he, with *Talinini* and *Taparalili*, performed the first *ilania* at Biawururu, on central Bathurst Island. *Taparalili* is at *q*, and other honey-men, *Tupiringini* and *Maipuringa* are at *p* and *s*.

On Pl. 3C, the artist tried to show some of the decorations used in a *pukamuni* ceremony. The series of cross-hatched, more or less rectangular panels, at the top, represent the painted bark baskets which are left on the grave; the vertical panels at the bottom, lines of colour in the hair of the performers, and the groups of chevron designs, the scars on the bodies of the men and women. The horizontal band across the centre of the painting represents the hair belts of the men.

Pl. 3D and 3E are designs which, the artists told me, would be similar to those painted on the burial poles of *Purukupali*.

The artist of Pl. 3D did not give me the meaning of his design, but on Pl. 3E, the four barred panels, *a*, *a*, etc., represent native roads; the plain bands, *b*, *b*, etc., on either side, horizontal lines of clouds, the diagonal bands, in the upper and lower panels, native fig trees, and the cross-hatched diamond-shaped panels, spider webs on the trees.

Before the rituals at Tapararimi began, the fish-men engaged in a contest to prove who could throw their spears the furthest. *Pipinjawari* was the most skilled of them all, for, even though he stood behind the others, his spears still travelled the greatest distance. Wherever the spears landed, there are now large eucalyptus trees, the largest of them, called *Warukumbi*, being once the spear of *Pipinjawari*. But in winning the contest, the fish-man strained his spine so badly that parts of the vertebrae were forced through the skin.

At the conclusion of the rituals, it was the duty of *Pipinjawari* to pay the "workers" for the labour of cutting and painting the poles, and for making

[32] Other informants state they are large trees. Probably both informants are correct.

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the ceremonial baskets. But he did not fulfil his obligations. This breach of faith so infuriated the other fish-men that they chased him through the trees to spear him. Thinking to escape punishment, *Pipinjawari* jumped into the sea, and transformed himself into the queen fish. But the other men, also transforming themselves into fish, continued the chase. Even now, on calm days, the aborigines often see *Pipinjawari*, with his broken back-bone now a dorsal fin, jumping out of the water to escape his pursuers.[84]

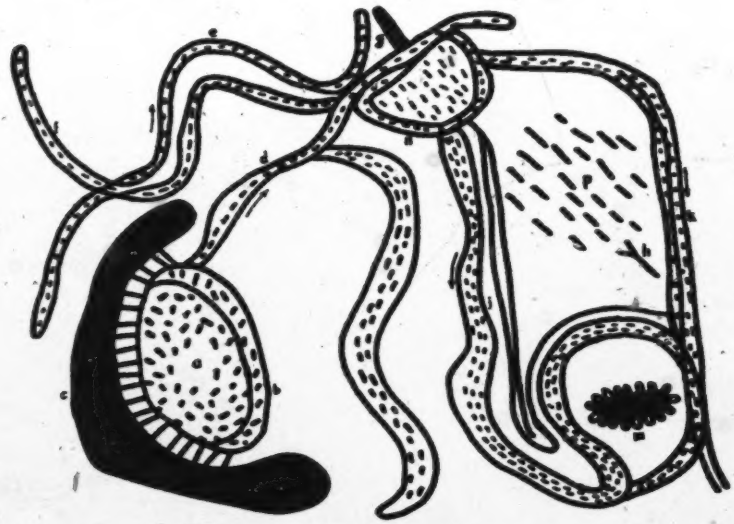

FIG. 3. *Spear-throwing Contest of Pipinjawari*

Fig. 3 is a crayon drawing of *Purukupali's pukamani* and the spear-throwing contest of the fish-people.

On the lower left is Timbaranapi, where all the mythical people assembled to perform the last *ilania* before carrying out the final burial rituals.

At Timbaranapi, the men danced in the *milimika*, *a*, and the women on the outskirts at *b*. The radiating lines on the edge of the *milimika* are many baskets filled with food for the "workers" (Pl. 25B), and crescent *c*, the ground cleared by the "workers". The men travelled by path, *e*, and the

[84] This is the same fish as the *Tiwimbu* of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford 1956, p. 349).

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women by *d*, to a place, *n*, where they painted one another for the final *pukamani* rituals.

Whilst there, the fish-men engaged in the spear-throwing contest mentioned in the myth.[86] Their footmarks are in circle, *n*, and the places where the spears fell at *p*. *Pipinjawari*, who stood behind the others at *g*, threw his spear the furthest, a large eucalyptus tree, *h*, being the transformed spear. The spears of the other fish-men at *p* are smaller eucalyptus trees.

When everyone had finished decorating themselves, both men and women moved to *m*, where the burial poles had been erected around the grave, the women again reaching their destination by a different path, *k*. It was at the completion of these rituals that the fish-men quarrelled with *Pipinjawari* because he refused to give the "workers" presents for their duties.

5. THE CLOSE OF THE CREATION PERIOD

The escape of *Pipinjawari*, which brought the *palaneri* (creation period) to a close, was the signal for the mythical people to return to their camps and to transform themselves into the various birds, fish, reptiles, heavenly bodies and inanimate objects of today.

Tjapara, the moon-man, rose into the sky, his face and body deeply scarred with the wounds he had received in his quarrel with *Purukupali*. *Bima*, his lover, and the mother of the dead child, *Djinini*, still bearing the mark on her head where *Purukupali* had struck her with his throwing stick, became the curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*) which still roams the forest at night, wailing in remorse for her misdeeds and for the child she lost.

Wuriupranala, one of the daughters of the original creator, *Mudungkala*, changed herself into the sun-woman, who travels across the sky carrying the torch of blazing bark given to her by *Purukupali*. The *Maludaianini* men, with the ceremonial paint still on their bodies, became that sparkling galaxy, the Milky Way.

Tukimbini, the grandson of *Murupiangkala*, instructed the mythical people (many of whom were his wives and relatives), to establish a totemic place at their old camps on Melville and Bathurst Islands to create the aboriginal foods belonging to each place, and then to change themselves into the particular bird, reptile, fish or inanimate object with which that locality is now associated.

[86] At a *pukamani* ceremony we witnessed at Melville Island, one of the Bathurst Islanders, *Jikungkalami*, impersonating *Pipinjawari*, threw sticks, as spears, over the men carrying the poles to the grave, chanting "*Kuniprak wanikali kurinari*", meaning "We throw spears to find out who goes farthest."

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773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 821 [825] When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamp-lands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *tapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, span the heavens. It is then that the dried perspiration which the *Maludaianini* rub from their bodies, [512] falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 778 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of *Mudungkala*
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle)	Not known
	Wuriupranala (sun)	Daughter of *Mudungkala*
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of *Wuriupranala*
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

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Circle *y*, pictures the totem place of *Tukimbini* at Murupianga; *w*, a mangrove swamp not far from the coastline; circle *t*, a cliff with sand at its base (probably on the sea shore); and circles *f*, *j*, and *r* are the open sea. Circle *g* pictures a submerged reef at Murupianga; *d*, *d*, are two sandbanks off the shore, and *h*, *h*, patches of jungle on the land. At *c*, *c*, etc., are the sandy shores; at *b*, *b*, etc., the lines of driftwood and debris cast upon them, while the cross-hatched background represents the tracks made in the soft sand by the hermit crabs.

Pl. 7A deals with *Tukimbini* and his many wives at Murupianga during the *pukamani* (creation) period.

The central figure is *Tukimbini*, the circles on either side of his face indicating the yellow ornaments he wore while he was a man. When later, he transformed himself into the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) he still retained those decorations. *Tukimbini's* penis is at *b*. The white oval, *c*, is his paper-bark shelter, the black oval, *e*, being the bough shed he built over the shelter to make it cooler. His camp fires, on either side of him, are at *d*, *d*, etc., and those of three of his wives at *n*, *n*, *n*.

The eight circles, *g*, *g*, etc., represent some of the wives of *Tukimbini*. Within the white circle, the dots, *c*, indicate *Tukimbini's* grass bed, and those over the remainder of the painting, the beds of his wives. The outer white circle, *m*, symbolizes the high ground at Murupianga.

The Hawk-bill Turtle-woman, Garagalani, at Wuriupi

The hawk-bill turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, and her husband, *Marakuni*, in company with the crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, the wild honey-man, *Mauwini*, and many others, took part in the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. It was the duty of *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women, to make the large folded bark baskets, and for their husbands to decorate them.

At the close of the creation period, when *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women were transformed into sea creatures, the baskets became their carapaces, and the painted designs on the baskets, the shell pattern on their backs.

Pl. 8A, B, two sides of a *pukamuni* basket, refers to the turtle-woman, *Garagalani*. On B, the circular designs symbolize turtle eggs; the vertical bands, lengths of turtle rope, made from fibrous bark, and the cross-hatched areas, patches of sea-grass, the food of the turtles.

On the opposite side of the basket, Pl. 8A, the bands refer to the turtle rope, while the cross-hatching is the sea-grass.

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Although, in the interpretation of the paintings on this basket, gathered in the early days of the expedition, the designs were not given topographical meanings, there is little doubt that fuller inquiries would have shown that the designs and the topography were linked.

On Pl. 8c, D, *c*, pictures the body of the turtle-woman, *a*, *a*, being the front flippers, *d*, *d*, the hind flippers, *b*, the carapace, *g*, the head, and *e*, *e*, *e*, etc., the bones of the creature; the dotted background, *f*, represents the marks on the tortoise-shell of the carapace.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala, at Wuriupi

Every morning, the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,[80] climbs a high mountain in the east, and, carrying her blazing torch of bark, travels across the sky, parallel to the earth. Sometimes, the sun-woman, to please her husband, powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which, flying into the sky, reddens the early morning clouds.

On reaching the western horizon the sun-woman extinguishes her bark torch, and, by the light from its glowing end, finds her way back to the east through the underground world, Ilara.[80] But, before setting out on that journey, *Wuriupranala* again decorates herself with powdered ochres thereby colouring both the western sky and the clouds.

Nine bark paintings, i.e. Pls. 5A, B, C, D, 6A, B, 7B, C, D, illustrate the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, and the topography of Wuriupi. The remainder of the paintings dealing with the sun are described under Astronomy, Chapter 7.

Pl. 5A is a painting on a small bark basket, which deals with the myth of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

The circle in the centre of each disc, of which there are sixteen, symbolizes the sun-woman, the radiating lines being the rays of light at sunrise and sunset. The three wide vertical bands represent the track of the sun-woman as she moves across the sky, and the lines, linking the discs, the path in the underground world, Ilara, along which *Wuriupranala* returns to the east. The cross-hatched areas are rain, the dots, stars (*tapalinga*), and the short parallel lines, top and bottom, rain falling from the clouds.

The central dot on Pl. 5B, is the "eye" of the sun-woman seated in her paper-bark hut (the inner circle). The five radiating lines within the circle are the posts of her hut, the cross-hatching is her hair, and the five outer concentric circles are her hair-string belts.

[80] In one bark painting, Pl. 6oA, B, *Wuriupranala* and *Muripiangkala* alternately travel across the sky. This is the only time that *Muripiangkala* was referred to as a sun-woman.

[80] The moon returns to the east by a similar road.

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The vertical lines at the bottom of the painting symbolize the rays of the sun-woman as she rises in the east, and the groups of dots throughout the design, the stars, *tapalinga*, in the night sky. 532x 773

On Pl. 5c, d, the two concentric circles, *d*, indicate the surface, while *a*, is the *inumba*,[88] or life centre of the sun.

The painting shows a number of different clouds; a thin misty cloud at *b*, heavy rain clouds which temporarily obscure the sun at *h*, *h*, *h*, etc., a mackerel sky at *c* (indicated by the short radiating lines), and cumulus clouds at *j*, *j*.

The colours of sunrise and sunset are indicated by the horizontal bands, *g*, *g*; while the lines of light, which sometimes radiate from the sunset, are at *e*, *e*, etc., and those from the sunrise at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 6a, b, is a bark painting of Wuriupi, the totem place of *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman. Her body, now a patch of jungle, is at *a*; her head at *n*, and her abdomen at *k*. Her arms are at *b*, *b*; her legs at *c*, *c*; her breasts at *j*, *j*; her ears at *m*, *m*; the chevron scars on her arms and back at *e*, *e*, etc. 532x 778

The windbreak of her camp, *d*, is a sandy beach at Wuriupi, and the shelter, under which she rested, is a large yam, whose leaves, vine and blossoms, are indicated by symbols, *h*, *h*; *l*, *l*; *v*, *v*, etc. Tracks made by the sun-woman are shown at *x*, *x*; *x*, *x*; red rocks on the beach at *g*, *g*; and black rocks at *f*, *f*.

Pl. 7b, a painting on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, also refers to the sun-woman. 532x 821

The sun is represented by the black circle in the lower section of the design, while the disc in the centre of the circle is the torch of blazing bark which the sun-woman carries across the sky to provide the world with light and heat. The white, upper disc represents the large thunderclouds which, at the beginning of the wet season, often obscure the sun.[89] The surrounding concentric circles and the parallel lines across the middle of the design symbolize the colours on the edge of the clouds at sunrise or sunset.

The lighter coloured diagonal lines refer to groups of cirrus clouds, and the darker, to monsoon clouds of the rainy season. The dots are the stars of the night sky.

The vertical black line in the middle of Pl. 7d, is the track across the sky of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*. The black disc across the bottom is the sun in the morning; the one immediately above, the sun at midday; the next,

[88] The *inumba* is a universal life essence which permeates all living things, the plants, the creatures and man. It is situated in the solar-plexus of man. This is the same life essence as that of the Pitjandjara tribe of the western deserts of Central Australia (Mountford, 1948, p. 111). [774] [171]

[89] When a thundercloud obscures the sun, the aborigines believe that *Andjahi* (fresh water) has taken his wife, *Wuriupranala*, to his camp.

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×532 821 the sun at mid-afternoon, and the disc on the upper edge, *Wuriupranala* at sunset.

The lighter coloured radiating bands are the lines of light from the blazing bark torch, carried by the sun-woman; the dark-coloured ovals between, a number of *tukimbinis* (yellow-eared honey-eaters), and the lighter coloured ovals, a number of *wuriuprinilis* (mistletoe birds).

In the centre of Pl. 7c, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, seated in her bark hut at Wuriupi. The central dark mark on her abdomen indicates body paint; the white lines, *a*, *a*, are her legs, *b*, *b*, her feet and *c*, *c*, her arms.

The dark-coloured oval, *g*, is the sun-woman's paper-bark hut; the light-coloured outer circle, *d*, is a bough shed built over the hut to keep it cool, and the short radiating lines between the two circles, the posts supporting the roof.

The Eucalyptus-tree Woman, Paninduela, at Panindu

773 The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Paninduela*, created the totemic country of Panindu, north-eastern Melville Island, the streams, fish, turtles, geese and other creatures, as well as water-lilies, spike-rushes and other plants that grow in the freshwater swamps.

778 Panindu is on the upper reaches of an unnamed river in north-eastern Melville Island; Wailu, the totemic place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at the mouth of the same stream.

×532 778 On Pl. 9A, B, *a*, *a*, are the Panindu waterholes; *b*, *b*, waterfalls which flow from upper to lower pools; and *c*, *c*, are lines of foam caused by the falling water. At *t*, *t*, etc., are *pubiaka*, and *u*, *u*, etc., paper-bark trees on the banks of the stream, and at *h*, *h*, and *j*, *j*, dead *pubiaka* and paper-bark trees lying in the water.

Two lagoons, or backwaters, are indicated at *e*, *e*; two sedge-covered swamps at *f*, *g*. Water-grass on the bottom of the swamp is shown by the cross-hatched areas, *s*, *s*.

The Freshwater-man, Andjalui

778 776 The totem place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island. At Wailu there also lived the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*,[38] her son, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms, and her two daughters, *Tominuka*, the woman of the monsoon rains, and *Bumerali*, the woman of the lightning.

[38] Some aborigines thought, but were not sure, that *Andjalui* was the husband of both *Kwouk-kwouk*, and the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

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a, *a* (the black areas), indicate stony hills near her camp in the upper world; and the dots on the background, the stars, *tapalingas*, which live in the upper world with the lightning woman.

The Cat-fish Woman, Piriloukala at Pirilou

Pirilou, on the upper Goose Creek swamps, is the totemic place of a mythical cat-fish woman, *Piriloukala*. She was sent by *Tukimbini* to create both the totemic country and the food necessary for the natives to live on it, i.e., geese, brolgas, ducks, freshwater goannas, turtles, waterlily bulbs, red and white fruited *Eugenia* trees, and the various kinds of yams that prefer the damp soil.

On Pl. 10C, the darker crossed circles are the black, and the lighter, the white rocks at Pirilou. Panels, such as *a*, symbolize the trunks of the paper-bark trees growing in the swamp; *b*, the many waterlilies on its surface, and the white vertical lines on the background, streams of fresh water in the swamp-lands.

The Fish-woman, Wuringa, at Arangu

Tukimbini sent the fish-woman, *Wuringa*, to establish a camp at Arangu, in Curtis Haven, northern Melville Island. Later, *Wuringa's* camp was transformed into a group of flat rocks which are uncovered only at low tide.

Wuringa created the aboriginal foods of the area, turtles, crabs, fish of all kinds, yams, cabbage palms and hives of wild honey.

Two bark paintings illustrate Arangu and its surroundings, Pl. 11C and Pl. 11D.

On Pl. 11C, *a*, is a long submerged reef at Arangu; *d*, *d*, *d*, smaller submerged rocks; *b*, *c*, long sand-bars, while at *e*, *e*, are jelly fish. The remainder of the ovals are oysters on the rocks at Arangu.

On Pl. 11D, *a*, is the totemic place, Arangu; *b*, represents the soft friable boulders near by; *c*, a large rock on the coast; *d*, wave breaking over it; *h*, white sand on the beach, and *j*, the sand and gravel on the sea bottom.

Symbol *e*, indicates black trepang; *f*, *f*, white trepang; *r*, an especially large trepang; *n*, a jelly fish, and *m*, a bed of oysters. At *k*, are many pearl shells, and at *s*, *s*, conch shells. A deep channel in Curtis Haven is indicated at *p*, a yellow rock under the water, at *o*, and the seaweed growing on the rocks at Arangu, by the lighter-coloured dots on the background.

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The Logger-head Turtle-woman, Ringa, at Jutapinta

773 At the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*, *Ringa*, the logger-head turtle, with *Garagalani*, the hawk-bill turtle, were responsible for making the large bark ceremonial baskets.[87] When, at the close of the creation period, the men and women changed themselves into creatures or plants, the turtle-women, including *Ringa*, became the sea-going turtles.

×532 778 Pl. 12C deals with the totemic place of the logger-head turtle, a submerged reef, called Jutapinta, some miles north of Karslake Island. The central figure is the reef, the totemic body of the woman, *Ringa*, and the encircling dark-coloured area, *a*, the white sand on the sea bottom. At *b*, is the sea-water, and *c*, *c*, etc., are black rocks under the water, which today are frequented by the logger-head turtles. The yellow bands, *d*, *d*, etc., indicate the seaweed, and the white dotted areas, *e*, *e*, etc., the oysters that live on the reef. The dots, surrounding the central figure, symbolize the eggs inside the body of the logger-head turtle. Unlike the green or hawkbill turtles, the logger-heads do not lay their eggs on the sandy shore.

The Crocodile-woman, Wilinduela, at Wilindu

773 Toward the close of the creation period, the woman, *Wilinduela*, and her sister, *Numanirakala*, were sent out by their brother, *Tukimbini*, to establish totemic centres on northern Melville Island. When they reached Shark Bay, *Wilinduela* stayed on the high ground, i.e., Wilindu Island, while she sent her younger sister to Numanira, a reef uncovered only at low water. Before the two sisters separated, however, they camped together on the mainland at Mundinju (Pl. 10A).

×532 778 The black centre of Pl. 11A, is the totem place of the crocodile-woman on Wilindu Island, the surrounding white circle indicating the jungle around the totemic place. The small black discs are dark-coloured rocks on the cliffs, and the ligher-coloured, rocks on the sea beach. The outer circle is the sea.

On Pl. 11B the central disc is Wilindu Island, while the four circles on its circumference are freshwater springs.

The lower panel *a*, indicates black and *b*, yellow rocks on the coast; *c*, and *e*, *e*, etc., are areas of jungle; *f*, is a rock projecting from the sea, and *h*, the shores of Shark Bay. Poisonous yams, *kuku*, are indicated at *d*, and edible yams at *g*. The many circular discs are oysters on the rocks at Wilindu.

[462] [764] [87] At the conclusion of the present-day burial rites, these baskets, made by the women and painted by the men, are placed on the top of the burial poles as presents to the dead.

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Pl. 10A pictures Mundinju, the place where the two sisters, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala* camped before the former made her home at Wilindu, and the latter at Numanira. 532x 778

The central black disc is Mundinju; the smaller black discs, throughout the painting, are holes in the cliffs from which seep streams of fresh water. The long, radiating panels are bands of red and yellow ochres in the cliffs, the groups of parallel lines, gutters formed in the cliffs, where *Wilinduela* urinated; and the groups of chevron designs, ferns growing among the rocks.

The Red-ochre Woman, Numanirakala, at Numanira

Numanira, created by *Numanirakala*, is a partly submerged reef a short distance from Wulrungku (Karslake Island), north-western Melville Island. 778

At low tide, the aborigines collect one of the best ochres in the country from this locality, even better than that from Imilu (Fig. 1), for, although Imilu ochres are brightest when used dry, those from Numanira are best when mixed with water. [317]

The central design on Pl. 12B indicates the flat rocks of the submerged totemic place at Numanira, while similar designs, above and below, are other rocks near by. The darker-coloured segments in these three designs indicate the red ochre, and the lighter segments the mud on the sea bottom. The white circles represent sea-weed, the darker, small rocks under the water, and the dots, the corals growing on those rocks. 532x 778

The central black disc of Pl. 12D is Numanira; the surrounding white circle, the sand on the sea floor, and the narrow darker line on the periphery, the red ochre, for which the island is noted.

The radiating black panels symbolize clams, the lighter panels, oysters, both of which are plentiful on the rocks of the island. The outer circle is the mud, and the dots are bunches of weed on the sea-bottom.

The Spider-woman, Baraka, at Rungani

During *palaneri* times, the spider-woman, *Baraka*, who lived at Rungani, made a bark basket for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. She first stripped a sheet of bark from a eucalyptus tree, heated it over the fire to make it flexible, then, bending it double, sewed the edges together with split lawyer vine. From that day until now, the women of Melville and Bathurst Islands have made their baskets in the same manner. After the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* instructed his wife, *Baraka*, to establish a totemic place at Rungani, northern Melville Island. 773 285 [462] 773

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The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Timarai-inga, at Mandumpi

Pl. 12A pictures the totem place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Timarai-inga*, a small rocky island, near the coast at Mandumpi, north-western Melville Island. 532x 778

The black diamond shapes indicate bands of yellow ochre, and the light-coloured designs, *a*, *a*, etc., white ochres in the cliff face at Mandumpi. The barred panels, *b*, *b*, symbolize a freshwater stream which flows into the sea. The chevrons throughout the design picture ferns growing among the rocks.

Although I did not gather specific details of the totemic story, it is safe to assume that *Timarai-inga* was the creator of this totemic place. [114]

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Pungulu, at Patuapuru

The totemic place of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Pungulu*, is at Patuapuru (Deception Point), northern Bathurst Island.

The horizontal lines *b*, *b*, on Pl. 14C, D, symbolize the open sea at Patuapuru, and *a*, *a*, etc., on the top of the painting, high light-coloured cliffs. At *c*, is another cliff of reddish colour, and *d*, *d*, etc., are the many rocks on the beach which are covered at high tide.

The long panel *f*, *f*, on the left-hand side of the painting, is the open beach at Patuapuru, and the vertical panels *e*, *e*, etc., are parallel lines of sand-ridges behind the beach.

In the centre line of the painting, at *h*, and *n*, are two casuarina trees, and at *k*, is a freshwater lagoon on the banks of which are many unidentified jungle trees. A high sandhill is indicated at *m* (upper right), and the marine grass on the sea-shore, by the cross-hatching on the background.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Aragoutourina,[39] *at Putawini*

The first camp of *Aragoutourina* was at Puntubu, at the headwaters of the Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, where she stayed for a while. She then travelled south-west over the watershed to Kuruwu River which empties its water into the Apsley Straits. After making this water-course, *Aragoutourina* walked to Putawini Point, western Bathurst Island,[40] where she created the topography and natural history of the surrounding country. 773

A jungle near Putawini is represented on Pl. 14A, B, by the central white 532x 778

[39] A red-flowering eucalypt locally known as the bloodwood.
[40] Called Marloo Point on the official maps.

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border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p*, *p*, etc., indicate rocks in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matingalia, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matingalia* created a rocky island of the same name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not able to gather further details of the mythical story.

The central vertical panel *a*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer surrounding white rectangle, *k*, *k*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at *k*, *k* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m*, *m*, etc., also form part of the island.

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*; another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another (unnamed) at *f*, *f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at *g*, *g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *lukupianga*, similar to those of *Jirakupai*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodilus porosus*, are indicated by the white discs, *n*, *n*, etc.

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical bird-man and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies (p. 123).

The central white circle on Pl. 16D, is Turiturina Island: the smaller circles, *a*, *a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; and *b*, *b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d*, *d*, *d*, etc., deposits of white ochre, used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves for their ceremonies during *palaueri* times.

At *e*, *e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama* (p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created for food.

The Sand-fly woman, Mandubuka, at Murninini

Mandubuka, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murninini, south-western Bathurst Island.

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The White-Cockatoo woman, Milapukala, at Milapuru

A white-cockatoo woman, *Milapukala*, made a large freshwater lagoon at Milapuru, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. At the same time she created opossums, wallabies, carpet snakes, many kinds of lizards, hives of wild honey and many other foods so that she, and later the aborigines, would have plenty to eat.

The central black oval on Pl. 16c, is the lagoon, the totem place of the white cockatoo-woman, the short radiating lines between this and the white oval being groups of rushes on the edge of the water.

The large white oval represents the backwaters of Milapuru, and the outer black oval, the red soil of the surrounding uplands. The radiating lines between these ovals are pandanus trees growing along the shores.

The Pandanus-tree woman, Miatrina, at Primadua

At the command of *Tukimbini*, the *Miatrina* women and their children travelled to Primadua, southern Bathurst Island to establish a totemic centre.

On Pl. 18a, the bark hut of the *Miatrina* women is shown as a black oval in the centre of the painting. This hut is now a submerged rock, called Purupatimu. The dark-coloured band, *a*, *a*, a red sandbar encircling Purupatimu, was once the grass and leaves which the mythical women pushed back when they were cleaning the ground for their camp.

The small white discs (the breasts of the *Miatrina* woman), are now black, submerged rocks; the series of vertical panels (once the children), sandbars in the shallow water; and the two meandering lines, *b*, *b*, (where the children played), salt-water creeks at Primadua. Mungunu, an adjacent locality, is associated with both the *Miatrina* woman and a white cockatoo-woman, *Inkuka*.

The Yam people, Tililindigia and Ubuna, at Primadua

This simple painting, Pl. 18b, about which I gathered but little information, deals with the totem place of two poisonous yams,[42] *Tililindigia* and *Ubuna* at Primadua.

The white oval, the totem place of the yam people, is now a hill at Primadua; the diagonals, outlined in white, are the large *ubuna* yams, and the dark-coloured diagonals, the smaller *tililindigia* yams. The dots represent trees of the Taulama jungle at the base of which trees the aborigines find these yams.

[42] In their raw state these yams are highly poisonous. If, however, they are husked, pounded out flat and soaked in water for several days, the yams are edible.

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The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mudungkala,[48] *at Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island)*

●773 After the burial of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* sent his wife, *Mudungkala*, to Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island) to establish a totemic place and create the local foods.

*532 Pl. 19c, D, illustrates, with considerable detail, the topography of the
778 island and the home of the little spirit children, *Pitipituis*.

The central design, *a*, is Jurubulinai; circle *b*, (lower left) depicts a small island nearby on which there is a freshwater spring where *Mudungkala* once urinated; and circle *c* (lower right) is a bed of cockles, one of the local foods created by the mythical woman.

On the lower left, a crescent, *d*, symbolizes a small salt-water creek in a mangrove swamp where *Mudungkala* quenched her thirst. At *f*, there is a large rock in the deeper water, a favourite haunt of the turtles. Here the mythical woman once collected white ochre to decorate herself.

Boulders, at one time the stone axes, *mungwanis*, of *Mudungkala* are at *e* (bottom); a stony point of land, the transformed bark basket, is at *g*; a pile of red rocks (her camp fire), at *h*; a sandbar (the cycad palm under which *Mudungkala* sheltered), at *j*; and a salt-water swamp (where she ground her stone axe), at *k*, *k*. The passage between Jurubulinai and Bathurst Island is indicated by the horizontal bands, *ll*, *ll*.

The white crescent, *m*, at the top of the painting, a large sand-bar, Unakumba, on the south of the island, is one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*. The aborigines claim that, when some distance from
[776] Unakumba, they often see the spirit children, but, as they come closer, the little people disappear.

When the tide is out, the *Pitipituis* play on a sandbar, *p*, but when it is covered, the spirit children go to their camps at *o*, under the sand, where everything is dry and warm.

[787] Should one of the spirit children wish to visit an aboriginal man in a
[842] dream, to ask for a mother, it walks along the road, *q*, and, if unsuccessful in its quest, returns by road, *r*. At *s*, on the left-hand side, is the waterhole from which the *Pitipituis* obtain their drinking water, and at *t*, is their diminutive bark canoe, less than a yard long, which, like the spirit children themselves, can be seen at a distance, but disappears when the aborigines come closer.

Red stones, *ee*, and yellow stones, *dd* (right), were once body paint used by the mythical eucalyptus-tree woman. Her nautilus-shell ornament is at *v*;

[48] Locally known as the ironwood tree.

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her camp, now a bed of oysters at *y*; her bark hut, a large boulder projecting from a sandbank, at *ee*; and her paper-bark water-carrier, now a large tree, at *r* (left).

The body and head of a carpet snake cooked and eaten by *Mudungkala* are boulders, *x*, *w*, on the coast of Jurubulinai. One of the spots at Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits, where *Mudungkala* camped when returning from *Purukupali's pukamuni*, is now a large rock, *bb* (lower left); a spring of fresh water, where she cooked her shell-fish, is at *ff*; while at *l* (centre), there is a patch of submarine grass, the favourite food of the turtles.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mantinuria, at Rulijunga

The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Mantinuria*, created a totemic place, Rulijunga, on the headwaters of the Tjipripu River.

At Rulijunga there is a large flat plain (central black design, Pl. 18A), which *Mantinuria* cleared so that the mythical people, travelling from Bathurst and western Melville Island, to attend the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, could perform an *ilanis* (p. 32).

The circles on the periphery of the central black disc, are the roots, and the eight long ovals, the trunks and leaves of cabbage palms which the *Mantinuria* woman created to provide food for herself and the participants of the *ilanis* ceremony.

The outer dark-coloured oval, at *a*, *a*, is the level plain surrounding the ceremonial ground, the inner black line symbolizing the red clouds at sunset and the white outer line, the cumulus clouds of the day-time. The dots represent small shrubs and tufts of grass at Rulijunga.

The Fork-tailed Kite-man, Mudati, and his wife, the Dingo-woman, Kirijuna, at Arunumpi

During *palaneri* times, *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite-man and his wife, *Kirijuna*, a dingo-woman, were travelling together near Arunumpi, southern Melville Island, when *Mudati* saw his wife's brother, *Jurumu*, the eagle-man, coming towards them. *Mudati* warned his wife, for her own safety, not to speak or even look at her brother, but the woman, who had not seen her brother for many years, took a quick glance just to see how much he had grown. Instantly, she dropped dead at her husband's feet. But even as he watched he saw her change into a dingo, rise to her feet and slink away.

Since then, the dingo, ashamed of her actions in those early times, keeps

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825 out of sight, while, following the command of *Mudati*, aboriginal brothers
[593] and sisters, once they become adult, never look at each other, nor converse, except through a third person.

×532 Pl. 20A, B, describes the natural features at Arunumpi. A large rock, at *a*,
778 was once *Mudati's* camp; a boulder, *d*, his fire; and a path, *c*, made by the mythical man as he walked to and from his camp at *a*. Another path, *b*, was made by a mangrove bird-man, *Ulubingini*, whose camp is at *j*. *Mudati* is at *m*; his wife, *Kirijuna*, at *k*, and *Jurumu*, at *f* (lower left).

Nearby, at *e*, there is a deposit of yellow ochre, and another at *g*, of white, both of which *Mudati* used when he was a *wadjeniati* initiate at the first *kulama* ceremony held at Turiturina (p. 123). *Mudati's kulama* initiation ornaments, now unspecified natural features are: his cockatoo feather headdress, *primitiki*, at *w*, *w*; arm ornaments, *palmatjinas*, at *x*, *x*, *x*; and cane arm ornaments, *jairinis*, at *v*. A *kulama* ground, *u*, where a ceremony was once held, is now a flat rocky surface, a half a mile in diameter, and the shelter, *t*, behind which the initiates rested during the ceremony, a large boulder.

At *h*, is a patch of jungle where *Kirijuna*, *Mudati's* wife, once collected yams. She left her palm leaf, *tulini*, basket at *l* (upper right); her small bark basket at *o*; and her larger bark basket at *z*. These are now outcropping rocks at the totemic site.

A turtle, once speared by *Mudati*, is now a submerged boulder at *m*; the sand-bank, on which he stood, is a high red cliff at *n*, and the large stream, in which he often caught fish, is indicated by the crescent-shape at *r*.

The Flying-fox man, Murungimpili, and Bamboo-woman, Kaialili, at the Kaialili lagoon

778 At the Kaialili lagoon, near the head of the De Vere creek at Muranapi, southern Melville Island, there are two totemic places, one belonging to *Murungimpili*, the flying-fox man, and the other to *Kaialili*,[44] the bamboo-
● [773] woman. Together, these mythical people created many trees, plants, cat-fish, crabs and other sea creatures.

×532 Pl. 20C, D, deals with the topography of the area. At *m*, is the Kaialili
778 lagoon, the totem place of the bamboo-woman, at *p*, the Buliati (De Vere) Creek; at *c*, *c*, are other small watercourses, and *e*, *e*, etc., springs, all of which run into the Kaialili lagoon. The cross-hatching at *o*, *o*, is a swamp, at the source of Buliati Creek, and the cross-hatched area, *f*, *f*, the grass on its

[44] I did not find out the relationships between *Murungimpili* and *Kaialili*; it is likely that they were man and wife.

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bottom. Symbols, *d* (right) and *g* (top), indicate the red cliffs of the Kaialili lagoon. The rocky banks of the Buliati Creek are indicated at *j*, and holes in the ground (once the camps of the man, *Murungimpill*) at *k*.

The open space on the bottom of the painting is the sea, circles, *b*, *b*, etc., being stones on the sandy bottom. Mangrove swamps *w*, *w*, are on the seashore; the dotted areas are jungle trees, *pintabinga*, and two species of eucalyptus trees, *aimingarina* and *ukitangira*. At *a*, *a*, etc., are places where the aborigines dig for ochre, which is similar to that at Imilu. Clouds as seen through the trees, are indicated by triangles, *k*, *k*, and eucalyptus trees by the dots at *n* (top).

The Blow-fly Woman, Mandubuka,[48] *at Muranapi*

Mandubuka, the blow-fly woman, established totemic places first in the mangrove swamps at Muranapi, then on Waitbak (N.W. Vernon) Island. The lower part of the design on Pl. 19A, B, pictures the natural features at Muranapi, and the upper, those at Waitbak.

The horizontal white band, *c*, *c*, symbolizes the swift tide-way between Muranapi and Waitbak Islands, while the central circle, *a*, the camp of *Mandubuka*, is a rock in the mangrove swamps.

Salt-water creeks, *b*, *b*, flow first into the small lagoons, *x*, *x*, then into the sea at *d*.

Mandubuka brought her drinking water from a spring, *f*, in palm-leaf (*tulini*) baskets. These baskets were later transformed into white boulders in the mangrove swamps.

The two freshwater swamps at *g*, and *h*, filled with bamboos, belong to *Kainlili* (the bamboo-woman of upper Muranapi, Pl. 20C, D). In swamp, *g*, grow the thick-walled species which the aborigines do not use, and in *h*, much smaller bamboos. At the present time, the mainlanders use these smaller bamboos as the shafts of their hunting spears.

Two groups of red stones, *j*, *j*, were once the cooking hearths, while the white boulders, *k*, *k*, are the transformed stone axes of *Mandubuka*.

After the mythical woman created the natural features on the coast of Muranapi, she continued her work on Waitbak Island. Setting out from her camp at *a*, she travelled along the right-hand path, *y*, only to find that the way was blocked by deep water. So she returned to her starting place and, by using the left-hand track, *l*, succeeded in reaching her destination. These tracks have since been transformed into long sand-bars in the sea.

[48] This is also the name of the sand-fly on Bathurst Island. There is possibly a link between the two totemic places, or they may be the same totemic being.

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At *m*, is Waitbak Island, where *Mandubuku* established her second camp; *v* and *w*, being springs where she obtained her drinking water, and *p*, a place where she left one of her yam sticks. The larger stick is now a small island off the coast of Waitbak, and two smaller sticks, *r*, *r*, are rocks on the shore.

Mandubuku sheltered from the rain under a large pandanus palm, *t*, and at *u*, cut a branch from a mangrove tree to make her digging sticks. This locality is now a large mangrove swamp.

The dots, on the upper panel, symbolize tufts of grass and small plants at Waitbak; and on the lower, the tall annual grass of the high land at Muranapi.

The March-fly Woman, Kudjatumpi, at Bonkaitji

[773] The totemic place created by the March-fly woman, *Kudjatumpi*, is a low rocky island, Kudjatumpi, about three miles from the coast at Bonkaitji, southern Melville Island.

The central black dot, *a*, on Pl. 21A, B, is the totem place of *Kudjatumpi*, and the surrounding white area, *b*, a bar of sand exposed at low tide. In the salt-water creek, Bonkaitji, *c* (upper left), which flows into the Clarence Strait, is a small rock, *d*. A fish, with stinging spines, called *pururidji* (probably the stone fish) is at *e* (upper left); and, an edible fish, since transformed into low rocks, on the edge of the waters, is at *j*.

Other natural features made by *Kudjatumpi* are: a small freshwater creek, Biriki, *f*, which flows into Bonkaitji; a lagoon, *h*, created by the mythical woman so that the freshwater turtles would have a place in which to live; a flat rock, *k*, in the deep water, where the present sea-going turtles gather their food; and a lagoon, *l*, which was once *Kudjatumpi's* permanent camp.

A hill, *i* (left) is her transformed bush shelter; a lagoon, *jj* (upper left), her temporary camp; a low rounded boulder, *q*, her fireplace; and a flat rock, *r*, a sheet of stringy-bark which she used as a roof. Long narrow stones at *p*, were once sticks that supported her bark shelter, and piles of stones, *s*, *s* (lower panel), places where she cooked her food.

Kudjatumpi's personal belongings, her paper-bark water carriers, *jurululu*, *w*, her crooked sticks, *m* (lower left), and *n* (centre), used to carry those baskets, her throwing sticks, *x* (right), and her stone axes, *o* (bottom), are now scattered piles of boulders on the uplands of Bonkaitji. Her head ornament of feathers, *kk* (upper left), on the other hand, has been transformed into a group of submerged rocks in the sea.

When the mythical woman painted her body, she created still more

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All the facial designs, about which I was able to find out the meanings (except Pl. 28b), dealt with some totemic creature, or myth. This was in direct contrast to the designs painted on the *tudini* burial poles, where few, if any, were associated with the myths or the totemic places.

A Wadjeniaki Initiate

Pl. 28a is the facial design of a *Wadjeniaki* initiate in the *kulama* ceremony (p. 130). The white dots represent a white edible plum, *murumbatana*, the red dots, a small red fruit, *kupalitju*, and the lines, the limbs of the trees on which the fruit grew. The white around the eyes and on the forehead is symbolical of *Purujiitini*, the boobook owl-man (*Ninox novae-zealandiae*), the leader of the second *kulama* ceremony.

The Poisonous Water Snake, Tuluma

Pl. 28b, a facial *pukamuni* design, symbolises the markings on the skin of a poisonous water snake, *tuluma*. Although I neglected to ask the aborigines whether there was any myth associated with this facial decoration, it is likely that the design refers to an incident in creation times.

The Shark, Tuduwala

At *Purukupali's pukamuni*, the shark-man, *Tuduwala*, represented on Pl. 28c, painted his face so that he would appear as ferocious as possible. The radiating lines round his eyes were supposed to have added greatly to his savage appearance. After the *pukamuni*, *Tuduwala* fought with *Kumuninu*, the salmon man, because the latter, although he had a large number of hair-belts, refused to give any to *Tuduwala*.

Although the shark-man escaped injury in that encounter, he wounded the fish-man a number of times with his throwing sticks, wounds which can still be seen, as parallel lines, on the head of the salmon (see Pl. 28f).

The Fish, Mungumini

Pl. 28d is a facial design, called *Mungumini*, worn at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* by a fish of the same name. The markings on the face are supposed to be similar to those on the head of the present-day fish.

The Thunder-man, Pukadringa

Pl. 28e, a *pukamuni* facial design, refers to the man of the thunderstorms, *Pukadringa*, and the dangerous *Maratji* (p. 154), both of whom are closely associated in the myths.

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pole at Punata on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the third example in the form of a highly conventionalised human figure (Pl. 38A, B, C), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956.

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis.

Although now and again some Malay prau, driven off its course by contrary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ."

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church. From these larger would develop the smaller figures.

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time, except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi would have owned few, if any steel tools.

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles,

[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *mudini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

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773 they do have one which explains, to their satisfaction, the origin of the small
×732 figures.[18]
765 On the occasion of the first *pukamuni* at Tapararimi, a man, *Piamatilidjara*, who later become the tawny frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*), made and painted a small figure, similar to Pl. 40c, *r*. This he placed on the grave to impersonate *Purukupali*, whose body was not buried there, he having walked into the sea and drowned himself.

×532 At present these human figures, both large and small, are made, either at
765 the request of the chief mourner, or by the "worker" himself. This happens if the man cutting the pole, holding the dead person in especial esteem, wishes to please his spirit. The smaller figures may represent either a son of the dead or mythical men and women of creation times.

When the burial poles are being erected, one of them, in human form, or a smaller figure, is occasionally placed at the head of the grave.[14] The *mopaditi*,
[775] on leaving its body, sees the wooden figure, and thinking it is either its son, or one of its old companions, stays at the grave and talks to it about old times. These wooden figures have no *imunka* (life essence), nevertheless the *mopaditi*, who is believed to be stupid and easily misled, thinks it is talking to a living person.

I collected two burial poles (Pl. 39) in the form of highly conventionalized
[126] human beings, and six smaller, full-length figures (Pl. 40, 41). I also photographed a pole, in human form, on an old grave (Pl. 38A, B, C).

Pl. 39A, B, C, is a *pukamuni* pole representing a performer, ready to take part in the final burial rituals. The projection *m* (39B), is his hair; *n*, *n*, are his ears, and *o*, *o*, his arms; *p* is a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball), and *s*, (39A), his backbone.

The cross-hatched squares, *a*, *a*, *a* (39A), represent patches of grass on the floor of the jungle; the designs, *e*, *e*, *e*, jungle trees, and *b*, *b*, *b*, spider webs in the branches.

The waves of the sea are indicated by the bands of short vertical lines, *c*, *c*, *c*; a boulder on the sea-shore by oval *f* (39A); oysters on the rocks by the squares with diagonal lines, *d*, *d*, and paper-bark trees by the groups of intersecting lines at *e*, *e*.

The designs on the face and head (39C) are: *k*, edible fruit, *h*, grass in

[174] [18] This myth does not necessarily indicate great age because those of non-literate people tend to keep up-to-date. Mountford, 1956, p. 98, and Worsley, 1955, p. 856, both give examples of how the Groote Eylandt aborigines have incorporated foreign elements in their creation stories.

[14] This is only one of many safeguards used by the Tiwi to keep the *mopaditi* away from the camp of its old companions, particularly during the first few days after death.

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on sheets of paper to illustrate the body markings used at each stage of initiation.

To give a complete account of the full *kulama* which included initiation as well as the preparation of the yam for food, I have included both groups of rituals, as they would have been performed in the original *kulama* ceremony. However, it must be borne in mind that we witnessed only the rituals belonging to the *kulama* yam. As stated before, the details of initiation were obtained from the fully initiated men.

I. THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

(1) *The first Kulama Ceremony*

During *palaweri* (creation) times, not long before the death of *Purukupali*, when all the animals and birds were still men and women, *Purujikini*, a boobook owl-man, and his wife, *Pinsoma*, a barn owl-woman, decided to perform the first *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina, in Port Hurd, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1). They invited *Jirakati*, later the white-headed sea-eagle, and *Tupatupini*, the small owl, to be present, planning to make them the first initiates. Many other people assisted in the ceremony, the *Ningauis*, a small spirit people who still live in the mangrove swamps nearby; *Inwati*, *Maawini* and *Taparalili*, three groups of the honey people; *Jirakupai*, the sea-going crocodile; *Narina*, the black cockatoo, and *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle.

Tulimbini, *Wuriuprinili* and a number of ancestral people from the eastern end of Melville Island, being opposed to the holding of the *kulama* ceremony, did not attend.

At the ceremony, the white-headed eagle, *Jirakati*, was the first *Wadjeniati* initiate (he still wears the ceremonial paint), and the owl, *Tupatupini*, the first *Miltinstrina*. There is no mention in the creation myths of the other grades of initiation.

When the first *kulama* ceremony was finished[18] the participants returned to their homes until the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, which was performed at the end of the *palaweri* (creation period). It was then that *Purujikini*, the leader

[18] Some informants referred to a fight which took place at the first *kulama* in which *Purujikini* was attacked because he did not wait for some late-comers. Others described another quarrel which started when one of the *kulama* men followed a woman of the Kaiduwuniri group into the mangrove swamps and raped her so badly that she died.

The Kaiduwuniri people attacked the performers of the *kulama*, killing some and driving others into the mangrove swamps where they live today as the *Ningauis*. The more elderly informants, *Tjomalumpua* and *Mukumirinia*, however, said that there were no quarrels at the first *kulama*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 881 of the *kulama* ceremony, became the boobook owl, his wife, *Pinuma*, the barn owl, *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, *Jirakui*, the white-headed sea-eagle, *Tupatupini*, a small owl, and so on.

(2) *The Second Kulama Ceremony*

After the close of *palaneri* times, the *Ningauis*, a spirit people, who had been present at the first *kulama*, performed a second ceremony on the same island, Turiturina, as was used by *Purutjikini* during the creation period. On the second occasion, the *Ningauis* carried out the complete *kulama*, which included not only the preparation of the poisonous *kulama* yam for food, but also the performance of all the grades of initiation from that of the *Marukumuni* to the *Mikingula*.

At its completion, the *Ningauis* decreed that the form of the ceremony with its proceeding and initiation rituals, should always be the same. The aborigines believe that if this form is altered, a mysterious sickness, called [753] *saini* will punish them by making everyone ill.

(3) *The Myth of the Ningauis*

After the second *kulama*, the *Ningauis* made their home in the mangrove swamps of a small island, Imaluna, near Cape Helvetius, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1).

776 The *Ningauis* are somewhat like the present-day aborigines, except that they are small people, about two feet high, with long hair and very short feet, their footmarks resembling those of an oversized dog. The aborigines often see these tracks on the edge of the mangrove swamps of Imaluna (Pl. 22c).

Should an aboriginal, when hunting through the swamps, go too near a home of the *Ningauis*, one of the *Ningauis* by calling, "Eeh", would cause the whole place to be suddenly enveloped in complete darkness. The native could bring the light back again by striking the trunk of a mangrove tree with a stick, but, in the meantime, the *Ningauis*, by taking advantage of the darkness, would have sneaked away. Therefore, no aboriginal has seen a *Ningaui* even though they are often heard in the mangrove swamps calling "Eeh, eeh", to each other.

When the *Ningauis* chant their songs after dark, the mangrove swamps become as brightly lit as in the day-time. There are stories of how aboriginal hunters, lured by the songs and the light, have wandered among the tangled mangroves to see what was going on, but as soon as the *Ningauis* heard the intruders, they finished their song with the word "Eeh",[16] which made the

[533] [16] The *Ningaui* songs chanted by *Jibungkahuni*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Waniampori* (p. 74), all ended with a long drawn-out "Eeh".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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former locality make their camp in a dense jungle, and at the latter, in the forest near the sea-coast. At one time, these *Pitipituis* lived at Juruna, but left after a while and established these camps at Jurilupa and Jampatural.

(9) Unakumbi (Buchanan Island). Here, the home of the *Pitipituis* is on a sandbank on the southern side of the island. When the tide is low, the little people play on the sandbank, but when it is high, they go to their underground homes, where it is warm and dry.

During the early creation (*palaneri*) times, *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the *Pitipituis* in a bark canoe, brought back some of the little people and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* so that they could have children. In a later period, *Purukupali* gave the *Pitipituis* to his wife, *Bima*, who in turn presented them to their future mothers.

Before *Purukupali* drowned himself, after the death of his son, *Djinini*, he told the *Pitipituis* that they must find their own mothers. Now, should one of these little people wish to become a human being, it travels to a native camp, and giving her name, asks one of the married men (when he is asleep) where its future mother is camping. After the father has indicated the particular wife, the little sprite waits a suitable opportunity to enter her vulva and start life as a human being.

The aborigines believe implicitly in the *Pitipituis* and the mystical origin of their children; several of them gave me details of how their children came to them in dreams.

Old *Tjamalampua* told of the time when, while he was asleep, the *mopaditi* of his dead father brought him a spirit child, and sat it on his knee saying, "This is your daughter." *Tjamalampua* directed the little *Pitipitui* to one of his wives, who later became its mother.

Muramajua described how his three children came to him.

(1) A boy, now dead, came from a Japanese plane[48] and asked for his wife as a mother. Later she felt the movements of the child.

(2) A little girl came to him in a dream and spat at him. His wife conceived soon afterwards.

(3) His last girl hit him on the head whilst he was asleep, and, in his fright, he slapped her face. It was not long afterwards that his wife became pregnant.

Those accounts indicate that although, ideally, the child comes to the father and asks for the mother, in actual practice they visit the father under a number of conditions.

[48] This aboriginal had worked with the Australian Navy during the war; an example of acculturation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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4. THE SEA-DOGS, THE WANKUIS

●773 A fragment of a myth tells of how, at the close of the creation period, a mythical man, called *Kirimu*, assembled all the dogs and asked them whether they would prefer to live on the land or in the sea. The present-day dingoe, the *Kirijimas*, chose the land, and others, the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, the sand-banks in the sea.

776 The home of one group of the sea-dogs is a long sand-bar on the eastern side of the entrance to Snake Bay, about a mile from the expedition camp, over which, except at the spring tides, the waves break continuously.
[823] The aborigines look on the breaking waves as the wagging tails of the *Wankuis*.

When the tide is out in the day-time and the sandbank exposed and dry, the sea-dogs, to escape being seen go to their camps under the sand.

When it is dark, the *Wankuis* leave their watery home, come on shore and make their camps in low caves at the base of a cliff at Snake Bay (Pl. 47B). While there, the *Wankuis* capture the sea-foods of the shallow waters, sting-rays, shell-fish and crabs. The aborigines claim that on the still nights they often hear the *Wankuis* barking.

In the shallow waters of a sandbar near Cape Fourcroy, the aborigines frequently see another kind of *Wankui* which walks on three legs, waving the fourth in the air.

532 Pl. 47D pictures the *Wankuis* at the sandbar in Snake Bay. In the centre,
776 with many teats, is the mother surrounded by her twelve sons. It is significant that there was no mention of the father.

5. THE RAINBOW, MARATJI

171 A belief in a mythical serpent-like creature, which is associated with, or is,
776 the rainbow, and is dangerous to strangers, but not to the local inhabitants,
[821] occupies an important place, not only in the mythology of the Australian aborigines, but in the mythologies of people in many parts of the world. These mythical creatures are usually highly-coloured (like the rainbow), of huge size and have both mane and beard.

I have traced these mythical creatures, in their various forms, from the River Murray in South Australia, through Central Australia to Arnhem Land. In the western deserts of Central Australia, Mountford, 1948, p. 138, writes, "The snake (*wonambi*) is a huge, many-coloured creature with a
[778] mane and a beard. It is feared . . . because it attacks all strangers who approach

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER VII

The Astronomy of the Tiwi

171 The Tiwi's knowledge of the night sky does not appear to be as extensive as 773 that of the aborigines of the adjoining Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, Part 6).

821 Although myths relating to the sun, the moon, the Milky Way, the stars and Orion and the Pleiades were often told, I was unable to find any relating to the Southern Cross, Scorpio, the Magellan Clouds and other constellations well-known to the aborigines of Arnhem Land.

The Universe

821 The Tiwi believe that the earth is flat, and so limited in area that, if they travel far from the shores of their tribal country, they would fall over the edge. As evidence of this they point out that, in the morning they can see *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman, rise above the eastern rim and, at the end of the day, disappear beneath the western rim of the world.

The earth, too, is of limited thickness, the aborigines believing that, if they dug a hole sufficiently deep they would reach the lower world, *Ilara*.[88]

772 The aboriginal universe of the Tiwi consists of four levels, (*a*) a subterranean world, Ilara, (*b*) the earth on which the aborigines live, (*c*), the sky-land, Juwuku, and (*d*) an upper world, Tuniruna.

772 On Ilara where it is always dark, there are two high stony ranges with a
776 valley between. It is along this valley that the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,
821 and according to some informants, the moon-man, *Tjapara*, guided only by the light of their glowing torch of bark, travel each day from the western horizon to their homes in the east. As there are no plants or animals on Ilara, the celestial travellers cannot gather any food during their underground journey, although they can quench their thirst at a stream which flows from the top of one of the high mountains.

During the wet season, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms; *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains; *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, with her husband and her many children, make their home on the sky-land,

[171] [88] I did not find a belief among the Melville Islanders, like that of the aborigines of Groote Eylandt, that the earth was a thin crust resting on the top of the water. (Mountford, 1956, p. 67.)

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824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear [171] of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

The Sky and the Upper World

532 821 772 Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d*, *d*, *d*, *d*, are some of the stars, *Tapalinga*; *f*, *f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 776 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 821 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[68]

532 773 776 821 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the myth of the sun-woman.

The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, moon and stars.

[68] See pp. 31, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The crescent, *a*, symbolizes the eastern horizon, beneath which both the sun-woman and moon-man have their camps; the transverse panels, *j*, *j*, *j*, indicate the western horizon.

The disc, *b*, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, while the black dot in the centre is her life essence, *imunka* (p. 137).

The sun-woman again is represented by the white disc, *s*, on the upper edge. This time she has several of the blazing torches, *m*, *n*, which she carries across the sky. Her many camps in the east are at *p*, *p*, etc. (lower edge).

The white oval, *h* (upper centre), is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, with his torches, shown as a series of radiating lines. Crescent, *g*, is the waxing, *f*, the waning moon, and the three adjacent squares, *e*, *e*, *e*, are places in the east where the moon-man made his camps. The cross-hatched areas, *p*, *k*, etc., indicate the men of the Milky Way, *Maludaiaaini*, and the groups of dots, such as *t*, the star-women, *Tapalingas*. At *o* (upper right) is an unidentified celestial tree.

Pl. 60A, B, pictures two suns, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*,[80] the moon, *Tjapara* and the stars, *Tapalinga*.

One of the sun-women, *Wuriupranala*, is shown at *f* (upper edge) the circle of radiating lines, *g*, symbolizing the flames of her bark torch. At *k*, on the bottom of the painting, is the other sun-woman, *Murupiangkala* with her bark torch, *j*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, is at *b*, his head at *e*, his shoulders at *c*, and his genitals at *d*.

The oval at *k* (upper right), is a mountain in the east from the top of which *Wuriupranala* or *Murupiangkala* alternately set out on their daily journey across the sky. The white oval at *l* (upper left) indicates the mountain on the western horizon where the sun-women rest for a while before they travel to the Kumpinulu lagoon, and prepare and eat their meal before returning to the east via the underground road, *m* (upper left).

The designs on the lower edge of the painting deal with the journey of the sun-woman, *Murupiangkala*; the white design *o*, is the mountain in the east from which she sets out on her journey across the sky; *p* represents the mountain in the west where she finishes her journey.

At *a*, *a*, etc., are the wives of *Tjapara*, the planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. Black ovals, *r*, *r*, are dark-coloured rain clouds, and ovals, *q*, *q*, clouds reddened by sunrise and sunset light. The dots are the star-women, the *Tapalingas*, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

Pl. 63A, B, deals with the sky journey of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

[80] The artist claimed that two sun-women travelled alternately across the sky. This however, was not the dominant belief.

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At *c*, is the sun-woman with her *imunka* (life essence) (see Pl. 61A, B). Her palm-leaf baskets are at *a* and *r* (left); her hair-string belts at *k*, *v* (bottom); a dingo-skin hair ornament is at *s* (left), and her head at *m* (top left).

The place where the sun woman appears above the eastern horizon is indicated at *f* (bottom) with her mid-day camp at *g*. There she makes a fire, *e* (the four radiating lines being the firewood), and cooks the food she has collected during the morning. Black rain clouds are indicated at *d*, and a thin cloud, which partly obscures the sun, at *h*.

The upper section of the painting deals with the evening camp *o*, of the sun-woman. Her fire and firewood are at *p*, *q*.

At *n*, on the upper left, is the daughter of the sun-woman (an unidentified star), the central dot at *m*, symbolizing her eye.

The Moon-man, Tjapara

At the conclusion of the fight between the moon-man, *Tjapara* and *Purukupali*, during creation times, the moon-man went up to the sky, bearing on his face the wounds he received at the hands of *Purukupali*.[60]

It was then *Purukupali* decreed that the whole of creation once dead, would remain dead for ever. However, *Tjapara*, the moon-man, partly escaped that decree, for, although he dies for three days every month, his life is eternally renewed.

As soon as *Tjapara* comes to life, he eats huge meals of the flesh of the mangrove crabs, which makes him grow fat and round at the end of a fortnight. However, this food makes him so ill that he sickens and dies.

The aborigines look upon the thin crescent of the waning moon as the skeleton of *Tjapara*,[61] and the body of the moon (visible by earth shine) as his spirit, *imunka*.

During his daily journey across the sky, the moon-man follows the same path as the sun-woman. He, however, carries a much smaller torch.

At one time the moon-man used to return to the east by a road just under the southern horizon. But a nest of hornets, which lived along that road, stung him so badly that he changed his path and now returns to his home by a northern route.[62]

The moon has four wives who live in the sky with him. They are the

[60] See p. 29 for details of the fight between *Purukupali* and *Tjapara*.

[61] A larval form of one of the cockroaches which curls up into an almost complete circle, is called *Tjaparalinga*, the son of the moon.

[62] Most informants, however, said that the moon returned to the east through the same underground world as the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. My informants were certain, however, that *Tjapara* had many more wives in his eastern camp. 776 821

When a ring forms around the moon, during moist weather, the aborigines believe the moon-man is taking part in a *kulama* ceremony. The ring is the mound of earth around the ceremonial circle, the *milimika* (p. 134), inside of which a multitude of star people are dancing and singing the *kulama* songs.

Two bark paintings illustrate the myth of the moon, Pl. 61c, D, and Pl. 62B. 532x 821

On Pl. 61c, D, one side of a *pukamani* basket illustrates the moon and the clouds. 776 [773]

In the centre, at *b*, is the crescent moon, *Tjapara*, the black oval, *a*, indicating his genitals. The monsoon clouds, *tarusapijina* (cumulus-nimbus) of the wet season are indicated by the six black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., and cumulus clouds, *kumbarasina*, by the three circles on the left-hand side at *e*, *e*, *e*. The older aborigines referred to these clouds as hills in the sky. The intersecting lines, *d*, *d*, etc., are "young" cumulus clouds, which, when they appear in the sky at the beginning of the wet season, remind the natives it is time to search the trees of the forest for the hives of the wild bees.

The surface of the ground is indicated by the long rectangle, *g*, on the lower edge, and the place of the stars, by the groups of dots at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 62D pictures the moon-man, *Tjapara*, and his many wives.

The central circle is the full moon, the lighter coloured crescents and ovals being the white clouds that sometimes obscure the moon at night; the dark-coloured, but similar designs are the clouds made yellow with the sunset light. The white circles are the planets, the wives of the moon man, and the dots, the stars, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

The Moon and the Stars

Pl. 62C is a painting of the night sky. The crescent, *b*, is the new moon, *Tjapara*, and the white vertical panel, the road, along which he travels. 532x 821

The larger circle on the right hand of the painting represents the morning star, probably Venus, and that on the left, the evening star. The many smaller circles are unidentified stars in the night sky. These are the wives of the men of the Milky Way, the *Mukukainini*.

The Men of the Milky Way

In creation times, certain men, the *Mukukainini*, although each had many wives, were always sneaking off into the jungle with the wives of other men. 773

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 This behaviour led to a great deal of trouble, developing later into a fight in which many of the *Maludaianini* men were wounded.

After that fight, the *Maludaianini* men rose into the sky and became the Milky Way; their wives were turned into stars.

776 821 When the sun-woman sinks beneath the western horizon, and the light from the blazing torch leaves the sky, the *Maludaianini* travel in a long line across the firmament (similar to the processional caterpillars at the beginning of the wet season), visiting their wives, the stars, as they go.

[827] Early in the evening the men of the Milky Way rub their hands over their bodies to remove the dried perspiration. This dried perspiration, falling on the eyelids of the aboriginal people, make them heavy with sleep.[65]

X 532 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60D, Pl. 62A, and Pl. 63C, illustrate the myth of the men of the Milky Way.

776 821 The black bars between *c*, *c*, and *c*, *c*, Pl. 60D, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*; the white disc, *a*, being their camp, while similar white designs, *b*, *b*, indicate the camps of their star wives.

The central white panel, *d*, is the Milky Way; the dark squares, *e*, *e*, etc., are the red clouds at sunrise and sunset, the dark-coloured vertical panels on either side of *d*, white cumulus clouds at night, and the six black discs, dark-coloured clouds, in the night sky.

Pl. 62A is another painting of the Milky Way. The circles with the radiating lines are the camp fires of the stars, the background being the shadows cast by those fires. The Coal Sack in which there are no fires, is the camp of the star women.[66]

The lighter panels, leading from the upper left to the lower right, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, the darker panels, from upper right to lower left, indicate the night sky.

Reading from the left on the lower edge, panels one, three and five symbolize cumulus clouds, *Kumbaratina*, of the night sky, and two, four and six, unidentified clouds, called *aratinia*.

The dotted panels on Pl. 63C represent the men of the Milky Way, the barred panels, the "roads", i.e., dark spaces, in the galaxy, and the five horizontal panels, eucalyptus trees in the firmament.

[855] [65] The aboriginal women, to the accompaniment of a lullaby, send their children to sleep by rubbing their fingers together above the face of the child in the same manner as the *Maludaianini* do in the sky.

[66] The Coal Sack is visible at Melville Island only during the hot "wet" season, i.e. from November to March. This had given rise to the belief that the star-women, who make their camp within that heavenly spectacle, do not need fires. The same belief accounts for the fact that, within the Coal Sack there are no stars (the camp-fires of the star-women).

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Orion and the Pleiades

Pl. 62a illustrates the myth of Orion and the Pleiades. In the astronomical myth Orion, *a*, is a pack of dingoes, called *dalimini*, who are for ever chasing the *Pleiades*, *b*, a group of wallabies, *kurakn*.

The black vertical lines on either side of *a*, and *b*, starless spaces in the Milky Way, *Maludaianini*, are the trunks of celestial bloodwood trees; the short lines at right-angles, their limbs, and the dots on the background, the many spider-webs on their branches.

The large outer ovals, unidentified parts of the Milky Way, are patches of bare and grass-covered land of the sky, and the eight discs on the insides of the ovals, some of the larger stars.

Discussion

There is a wide difference between the astronomical myths of Melville Island and those of the adjacent mainland. Nor do the Melville Islanders have such a detailed knowledge of the night sky as the tribes of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 479). This fact suggests, as do other aspects of the culture, that the natives of Melville Island have been isolated from the mainland cultures for a long time.

The effects of this isolation are most evident in two of the sky myths, i.e., the Milky Way, and the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades.

Throughout Australia, with few exceptions, the Milky Way is looked upon as a celestial river, along which the sky people travel in their canoes, and gather their food (Mountford, 1956, p. 491). No trace of this widespread myth is present on Melville Island, the Milky Way being a multitude of caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*.

Similarly with Orion and the Pleiades. In the Australian mainland myths, Orion is a man or men, and the Pleiades, a group of women, more often than not, the wives of the men of Orion.

In the place of this widespread myth, the Melville Islanders look upon the stars of Orion as a group of dingoes chasing the Pleiades, a mob of wallabies.

Even in the myth of the moon-man, there is a reversal of the adjacent Arnhem Land beliefs. In Arnhem Land, it was the moon who brought death to the world (Mountford, 1956, p. 495; Warner, 1937, p. 523). On Melville Island, it is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, who tries to stop *Purukupali* from imposing death on all living creatures.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [881]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 412 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe [177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of [415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the [285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

105 171 It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[46]

123 My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study, within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[46] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest. [114] [173]

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

sacred and the ordinary language, with the result that his list of Tiwi clans and their totems is confused and inaccurate.[4]

The Tiwi do not seem to associate very closely the totemic clan and the object that is the totem of the clan. For instance a man of the *Udunui* considers himself as *Udunini*, not as a crocodile, which he normally thinks of as *irungrabai*. The bond of solidarity is between one member of the clan and another rather than between a member of the clan and his totem.

So much is this the case that it is occasionally difficult to ascertain what is the natural object which gives the clan its name, *i.e.*, what is the totem of the clan. The *Ariŋgwila* are a case in point. In order to find what natural object was the emblem of this clan recourse had to be had to a few old men of the clan who were apparently the only people in the tribe who knew what natural object was the emblem of the *Ariŋgwila*. Everyone knew that a number of men, women and children were *Ariŋgwila*, thought of them and referred to them as *Ariŋgwila*, but very few members of the community connected them in any way with stones—" any kind of stones"—which according to these old men, are the *Ariŋgwila* totemic emblem.

With regard to the origin of the totemic clans and their names the natives say that the system of *pukui* was instituted by the old men a very long time ago. One old man said at some time in the distant past " *Udunui nia pukui kapi Primandua*—Udunui is my totem at Primandua," and so everyone knew his totem was *udunui*. Knowing their legends everyone knew the connection between *Udunui* and *Primandua* since it is at this place, a district in Bathurst Island, that *Munututni*, the father of all crocodiles, still has his home. Another old man decided upon *mandubaui* as his *pukui* because his favourite camping ground was at *Pripanyimili* which has a mythological association with *mandubuka* (the sand fly), such association being founded no doubt on the fact that sand flies breed in great numbers in the mangrove swamps of that region.

The *Ariŋgwila* (the stone totem) are closely associated with a famous rock in *Miŋgu* called *Wurukwompi* which, due no doubt to a hollow interior, gives forth a roll like thunder when beaten with a stick and hence is a sacred object to the natives. The former home of the *Ariŋgwila* is in the

[4] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, page 200.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 vicinity of this rock, so the legend runs, and they are often called the *Wurukwompila*.

. The *Timiririŋui* are said to have come originally from a small island off the coast of *Wraggu* where the *timiririŋa* (woolly-butt tree) is especially prolific due to the fact that it was here that *Prondupu*, the original mythological woolly-butt, settled after the battle at *Tanio* between the animal-men.

So the story goes on throughout the list of totems. It is not a myth properly so called since mythological figures are in it only incidentally. As told by the Tiwi it is a rationalized explanation on a basis of local geography and the desires of old men generations ago.

162 614 The clans vary greatly in size. The largest clan, *Mierdui*, numbers 132 persons whereas the *Paroliuŋibila* has only six and the *Taparui* only two. The distribution of the population amongst the clans and the hordes will be dealt with in a later paper in which the results of a census of the Tiwi population will be given.

C. W. M. HART

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *kilawisi* comes from his body and will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *emuket* of the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatarahe*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumerehe*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marukarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulampara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

123 For a while we all stretched our legs walking up the sandy bank of the river until mangrove roots stopped our progress.

[226] Once back in the canoe, Albert took over my place in the bow and with his fish-spear poised he kept a watchful eye on the deep green waters. Once he spied a barramundi and cautiously directed Big Jack to paddle towards the large fish, but it glided out of reach.

About a half mile up the river we came upon the shaded glen of casuarinas, another camping spot with its fresh-water well, named Anderaningo. Here instead of Black Joe's mob we found the Superintendent, Bill Grimster, his son Billy, and two natives, Billy-Two and Brownie. Black Joe's mob had arrived the afternoon before and had been ferried the ten miles up river to the next camping spot in the motor launch. Bill Grimster, having been told by Black Joe that he had seen our smoke near Piriu, knew that we had camped there, and he came back down river with an invitation for me to join them for a night of crocodile hunting before they returned to Snake Bay.

225 For many people in this area, hunting the large salt-water crocodile is a profession or a sought-after sport. In both cases it is dangerous, for this particular species of crocodile is intimidated by nothing and frequently will attack men or beasts without provocation. The crocodiles, which often measure twenty feet in length, [773] occupy a prominent place in the myths, legends, and art of the Tiwi, and many are the true-life tales of people who have lost their [538] lives in battling these beasts, which are hunted by the natives for their meat and valuable skins. When one considers the size of the animals and the size of the canoes, it is no wonder that Bill had discouraged any requests of mine to accompany them. So this invitation was a most welcome and pleasant surprise.

123 I transferred to the launch for the up-river camp so that I would be in time to leave on the hunt at dusk. For the first six miles the river wound seemingly aimlessly through the deep, dank, and mysterious mangrove swamps. At times the branches almost met across the water, brightly colored birds flitted from branch to branch and a subdued splash indicated a crocodile disturbed from his after- [776] noon slumber on the muddy bank. Adding to this almost evil atmosphere were strange clacking and sucking noises emanating from